

**Joint Task Force and Roundtable Meeting
Thursday, July 17, 2014, 4:00 – 6:30 PM
Rowand Suite, 2nd Floor, Edmonton Sutton Place Hotel**

Small Group Discussion Notes

These notes are detailed documentation of the small group discussions of the two small group discussions in the meeting. While all the groups were provided the same discussion questions, each group had slightly different approach in tackling the questions.

Groups	Small Group Discussion 1 Current State of Poverty in Edmonton	Small Group Discussion 2 Achieving the Desired State of Eliminating Poverty
<p>GROUP 1</p> <p><i>Group members:</i> Yvonne Chiu, Leanne Wagner, Justin Archer, Brenda St. Germain, Daniel McKennit, Peter Faid, Patricia Waismann</p> <p><i>Documentor:</i> Ward Antoniuk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural discrimination affects many types of people living in poverty and keep them in poverty. • Poverty is not having enough money, proper diet, and proper training (relating to nutrition). • Some people are poor because others are rich. • Aboriginal people need to develop their own framework for addressing poverty. • Change in systems is required to accommodate aboriginal and multicultural people. • Understanding of poverty is needed before we can define it. • Broader context of poverty must be created to accompany the definition. • Those most impacted by poverty in our City (ranked) - Aboriginal, newcomer and refugees, seniors, working poor, lone parents, people with mental health and addictions issues, LGBT youth. • Challenge will be around how we create strategies for populations mentioned here. • No given strategy will work for everyone, but there are aspects that each may have in common. • We should be talking about how poverty impacts everyone. • Our definition of poverty - needs reference to systemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framework: vision is clear; statements throughout are concise and compelling; goals only relate to income and resources - nothing about housing or education; the notion of inclusion needs to be added; many of the aspects lie outside of municipal jurisdiction (e.g. income support). • People in poverty will let us know. We also need to keep this in mind for our communication approach (voices from the lived experience). • Concern that we might create something that may not meet the expectations of the poor or even work for them. • There needs to be accountability for driving the poverty agenda. • Advocacy is implicit in moving the agenda forward and that we are committed to doing this together and with other levels of government. • There needs to be both engagement and inclusion with those living in poverty to insure they are involved. • Can framework be improved? Good starting point to be refined by involvement of those living in poverty. "lets not let the perfect undermine the possible." Add income, education, wellness, inclusion, food security, secure and

	<p>barriers; needs a contextual part that encompasses the experiences and perspectives of those most impacted.</p>	<p>safe communities, engagement, advocacy, and aboriginal voices (effects of historic trauma, racism) need to be realized in each of these areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framework needs to be cohesive with assumptions identified previously. • Need to have benchmarks and accountability. • Need to have our assumptions align with the work completed today. • Different communities experience poverty in different ways.
<p>GROUP 2</p> <p><i>Group members:</i> Zahra Somani, Kate Chisholm, Councillor Sohi, Patti Laboucaine, Fiona Cavanagh, Kate Gunn</p> <p><i>Documentor:</i> Gord Stewart</p>	<p><u>What is creating conditions of poverty in Edmonton?</u></p> <p>Historical Trauma is being felt today</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to recognize and know how to deal with it • Understand more • Need to understand the Aboriginal impact too <p>We need to divide the idea into 3:</p> <p>structures/circumstance/cultural</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • language barriers • classification • Address differentially <p>Health and Mental Health</p> <p>Structures: shift of Public Dollars from health to other areas (including 3 tier)</p> <p>Cultural - different analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are not 'lazy' people • beliefs as Canadians we are pioneering, traditional thoughts, hard working, stick-to-it-ness, perseverance • we (in this room) get bogged down in our own haves - we need better communication among ourselves 	<p><u>How does the over-all approach fit with our understanding of the drivers and realities of poverty in Edmonton?</u></p> <p>Focused areas - there is something missing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children grow up in poverty and access to sport and recreation - reinforces the have and have not • they need to feel like they belong to something • associated to clubs or activities <p>Missing health & wellness as well</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • food security <p>Access to food, wellness, recreation</p> <p>Engaging civil society and reward people for supporting the cause</p> <p>Political efficacy for the people we are working with</p> <p>We need to feel ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where can we do this? • engaging Community Leagues and other such systems to assist in the work <p>How much 'we' need to educate others that they are part of the solution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is denied access but how do we open access?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the 'others' if we are the 'haves'? <p>Conditions of the communication is wealth conventions</p> <p>Deep roots of racism - rooted in history</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> these have created these problems refugees are also sometime seen as "less worthy" <p>Education process is for white, middle class Solve cultural first and others will fall into place Challenge of born into poverty always seems of lacking hope Impacts different people differently</p> <p><u>What is making life difficult for people to move out of poverty?</u> There are 2: cultural and circumstantial Cultural solved at school Communicate of different ideas Understand biases that emerge We think very 'black & white' We live in an area (Edmonton & Alberta) of prosperity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of access to education/dialogue/skills training focus on the positive to open doors to :resources, health, education <p>We need the political will to make changes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> appeal to the sense of responsibility and action
<p>GROUP 3</p> <p><i>Group members:</i> Carman McNary, Eugene Ip, Mark Holmgren, Louis Francescutti, Deanna Williamson, Bin Lau</p> <p><i>Documentor:</i> Kris</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poverty is contextual. Poverty is about people and income – either income security or work. Poverty is part of a purposeful design – in other words, society is designed to have poverty. As is income inequality. The economy is established based around values of work. Mental illness, education, access to the job market – these are the factors, beyond economics, that create the conditions of poverty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, it is a good foundation. However, some of the comments lean more toward the notion of individual responsibility. The Task Force should adopt a scientific basis – we need to know what's working. Safety and security is a topic absent from the approach. An economic/community development approach is important – need to recognize assets. Focus on what we, as a city, can do – take other factors

<p>Andreychuk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to distinguish between economic design and the various other contributing factors. • Businesses are designed to make profit – hinges on the disenfranchised. • Minimum wage as a poverty wage. • Poverty encompasses more than the ‘marginalized’ – there are new groups emerging. • Poverty reproduces – literally impacts one’s DNA. • The dependency on dependency requires further examination. • Important to include the drivers at a cellular level. • We all, individually, have responsibility. • The focus on individual responsibility has made it more difficult for the individual. • Individual responsibility exists – but there are things stacked up against individuals. • Poverty is defined by resources. • We live in the richest Province, in the richest country and have a Mayor’s Task Force – if we can’t do it, no one is able to. • 5% of patients use 65% of health care resources. • Within the context of poverty – power/inequality but be assessed. A gender analysis is important. • Poverty is about those who do not have the capacity to secure ‘power’. • Whether it be individual or structural in nature, drivers of poverty influence both. 	<p>into account.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal three should be reframed to or clearly read as a goal. • Still driven by the notion of economic prosperity – prevention needs to be better acknowledged. • The ‘poor’ is not a homogeneous group – the diversity needs to be accounted for. • At this point, bench marks and milestones are absent. • The city can’t do it all – requires full participation in order to be successful. • 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness is a good example of good Government coordination. • Food security is current absent from the approach.
<p>GROUP 4</p> <p><i>Group members:</i> Councillor Henderson (on the phone), Jeff Bisanz, Elizabeth Potskin, Sandra Huculak, Jolene Volpe, Joe Doucet, Allan</p>	<p><u>What is creating conditions of poverty in Edmonton?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and social barriers that don’t allow people to access the labour market • Historical and intergenerational issues • Pressure on housing on an economy that is going strong • Financial literacy – need to work through a needs analysis • Things that perpetuate poverty such as limited affordable and quality child care 	<p><u>How does the over-all approach fit with our understanding of the drivers and realities of poverty in Edmonton?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement – weave into focal areas – critical to understand and achieve the vision; enabling communities to empower/support themselves • General agreement on goals • Need to bring back our assumptions as a way to validate the goals and approach in the framework

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- Access to good nutrition
- Life changes i.e. illness, injury, death
- Difficulty in manoeuvring and navigating the system
- Structural causes (society is not designed to address poverty; more about creating poverty); ideology of colonialism, patriarchal, hierarchical; underlying cultural discourse
- Access to the labour market – not a guarantee to get out of poverty – large numbers of working poor struggling with transportation issues, poor wages and working conditions, lack of benefits)
- Negative self-belief of people in poverty
- Who has vested interest in keeping people poor?

Edmonton-specific

- Rapid immigration – newcomer difficulties and foreign-credential recognition
- The way the city is spread-out creates challenges to access to transportation, services, city infrastructure
- Intergenerational issues – youth has limited access to resources and opportunities; social care for youth
- Living wage discussion

What is making life difficult for people to move out of poverty?

- Access to affordable and efficient transportation system
- Language barriers for new Canadians
- Addictions and mental health (inability to treat mental health illness)
- Access to proper medication
- Racism and discrimination (exclusion from opportunities, services and supports)
- Limited education
- Lack of strong social network
- Health status – employment depends on good health i.e. oral

- Need to include systems change – policies, regulations
- City could do preventing elements addressing social determinants of health – health promotion/public health is part of City role
- Health should be a key element in the plan; City could focus on healthy living but also could give advice to province and federal government (advocacy piece)

health

- Quality of services – not just access
- Sustained participation in the progress of work on ending poverty
- Crime
- Strong ideological drivers
- Not just consultation; those who are in poverty should drive our work
- There is a huge disconnect between the experience of people in poverty and how we talk about (“intellectualization of poverty”)

Who are most impacted by poverty in our city?

- Single mothers and children
- New to Canada, Alberta and Edmonton; “immigrant face of poverty”
- Cautious about labels; don’t capture the experience of poverty
- Seniors; while incomes have increased, they experience social issues such as mobility, participation, well being

How does our working definition of poverty align with this picture?

- Valuing the social piece
- Expectations of what needs are changing in the 20-30 years – relativity of needs
- Definition should be evaluated by our ability to measure something
- Preventing people from falling off